CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 20 February 1992, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Mutuale Kikanke (Zaire)

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The PRESIDENT (translated from French): The 613th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is called to order.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, first of all, I have the pleasure, on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, to welcome most warmly the Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, His Excellency Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who is our first speaker today.

I should like to express to His Excellency, the Vice-Chancellor, our gratitude for the interest with which he follows our work. Since 3 February 1983, he has visited us repeatedly to present the views of his Government on vital disarmament issues and, in particular, to invite us to step up negotiations for the complete prohibition of chemical weapons. I should also like to thank His Excellency, the Vice-Chancellor, for having kindly agreed to address the Conference at a turning-point, when negotiations on these weapons, we all hope, are to lead to a convention this year. I am convinced that the contribution of Germany will be decisive in achieving this goal. The commitment and effectiveness shown by the German delegation in its chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons also are proof of the importance of Germany's participation in the negotiating process in the Conference.

On the occasion of Zaire's accession to the presidency of the Conference, I should like, with your permission, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, to make a brief opening statement.

First of all, I should like to thank my predecessor, Ambassador Calovski of Yugoslavia, for the exemplary fashion in which he presided over our work at the beginning of our annual session. He performed a particularly difficult task with tact and with vast experience as a diplomat, which we all appreciate. He was able to settle many organizational issues, such as requests for participation from 40 non-member States and the re-establishment of four Ad Hoc Committees of the Conference, as well as an appropriate organizational framework for consideration of agenda items 2 and 3. Special coordinators have also been appointed on agenda items 1 and 8. For my part, I should note that I shall continue the consultations conducted by my predecessor on other pending issues before the Conference.

We are now in the last decade of this millenium. We are travelling on a planet which is suffering profound upheavals, unexpected challenges, the weakening of values and established concepts that previously seemed inviolable or untouchable. We live in a world of turbulence and of numerous perplexities and, in several areas, mankind is confronted with completely new options which call for restructuring, require reorientation and demand new attitudes on the part of both large and small Powers - a new "fresh" look, a keen awareness of the community of our interests and a broad sense of our common destiny.

From this standpoint, disarmament constitututes, in the realm of international relations, one of those privileged areas of awareness of this fellowship and of the sense of our belonging to a single great human family. What nation today can claim that it is safe in the event of the use of the monstrous weapons that human intelligence has invented and turned into such a

(The President)

flourishing industry? The notion of individual security must vanish and crumble before the compelling reality of collective security. That is why disarmament should not be considered as a choice, an option. In our view, it should be perceived as an unavoidable necessity for the survival of the whole human family, and of its environment.

Mankind has behind it a long, a very long, experience of war, and war, wherever it takes place and whatever its scale, is always and invariably a failure, a source of suffering, destruction and tension whether covert or overt, concealed or latent.

It is one of the lessons of modern times that the excessive ill-considered accumulation of weapons constitutes paradoxically a threat to the very security that it claims to afford.

Naturally, each State has a legitimate right to maintain enough armaments on its territory for it self-defence, but anything over and above that necessity, beyond that level, is over-armament.

The development of weapons increases insecurity, and the existence of an over-armed world represents a permanent situation of danger, a permanent potential threat to stability and peace; it represents a permanent temptation to the strongest to use their arms. Consequently, it makes peace fragile, it makes security uncertain. In short, in no way does it make the slightest contribution to the consolidation of peace and stability among peoples and among nations.

The international community is thus justified in expecting a great deal from this Conference. No effort should be spared to limit, and regulate the production and export of the latest arms and equipment, whatever they may be - nuclear or conventional, chemical or bacteriological, radiological or space weapons. It is fortunate that the Conference has now reached the stage of negotiations on a multilateral convention on chemical weapons.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to briefly recall a dimension of the disarmament problem, which, in my view, is not often sufficiently highlighted. It is the link, the almost natural link between disarmament, on the one hand, and the general obligation to settle disputes by peaceful means, on the other. The more this standard of conduct enters into the behaviour of Governments, the more willing States will be to have recourse to the mechanisms and procedures contemplated in the Charter of the United Nations and the less often will they resort to armed conflict or war. Any approach to the disarmament issue which does not take account or sufficiently stress this aspect could lead to very illusory results. How could it be otherwise, when we cannot really conceive of a world without conflicts, without clashes, without disputes, and when it is imperative that a solution be found to each conflict, to each clash and to each dispute?

In short, it is a matter of substituting peaceful settlement for the use of weapons. This is why the more importance the international community attaches to the obligation to settle disputes by peaceful means, the more it will serve the cause of disarmament.

(The President)

Ladies and gentlemen, I shall conclude by thanking you in advance for the help that I hope to receive from each and every one of you. I hope to conduct the negotiations on outstanding problems with the support and invaluable cooperation of all coordinators, of the Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Committees, and of the secretariat of the Conference. One of our most fervent wishes is that this year a multilateral convention on chemical weapons will be completed. Such an achievement would serve as an important catalyst for our future.

On my list of speakers for today I have the distinguished representatives of Germany, Argentina and Australia.

It is with pleasure that I now give the floor to the Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, His Excellency, Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

Mr. GENSCHER (Germany) (translated from German): Mr. President, allow me first of all to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. I wish you every success in carrying out this responsible task, which, I am convinced, is in good hands.

My vist today occurs during the initial phase of a very important annual session of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. In the next few months we must successfully conclude decade-long efforts to arrive at a global ban on a category of the most horrific weapons of mass destruction. This year we must succeed in finalizing a convention banning chemical weapons. That is an historic responsibility for the member States that here prepare new disarmament and arms control agreements on behalf of the international community.

Since my last visit to Geneva, in September 1990, for the Fourth NPT Review Conference, the situation in Europe and throughout the world has changed dramatically. In this changed situation, all of us have the chance to write a new chapter of arms control and disarmament history.

In nuclear disarmament new, epoch-making developments have been launched in the only one and a half years since the Fourth NPT Review Conference. In fulfilment of the obligation deriving from article 6 of the NPT, the United States and the former Soviet Union concluded far-reaching agreements. In the Summer of 1991, the START Treaty was signed. It will considerably reduce the strategic arsenals of the United States and the former Soviet Union. Its comprehensive verification regime will lead to intensive cooperation on security policy, cooperation which will have a confidence-building effect beyond the area directly concerned. President Bush and President Yeltsin have announced further drastic reductions in their strategic nuclear arsenals. United States Secretary of State Baker and Russian Foreign Minister Kosyrev have reaffirmed in Moscow their determination to achieve that major goal.

(Mr. Genscher, Germany)

Tactical nuclear weapons - i.e. short-range nuclear missiles and nuclear artillery - must, in accordance with the declarations of President Bush and former Soviet President Gorbachev, be eliminated without delay. These weapons have long been an anachronism, and Germany is particularly keen to see them eliminated.

We consider it necessary to achieve, at long last, a negotiating mandate for a test ban agreement. An agreement banning nuclear explosions for test purposes must be concluded at the earliest possible moment.

Germany itself has for decades renounced the manufacture and possession of, and access to, nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. But we know that real success can be achieved only through cooperative action by all States, since all of them are jointly concerned. The aim must be to safeguard and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime, whose central pillar is the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

We are gratified to note that a number of States acceded to the Treaty last year. We welcome the announced accession of France and China. I call upon all States that have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty without delay. I am also greatly gratified that most of the Soviet Union's successor States have already announced their intention to do so.

In 1995, a decision is to be taken on the extension period for the NPT. Germany decidedly advocates unlimited extension.

The danger of a spread of nuclear weapons is among the most burning security issues of our time. That danger must be met more effectively than in the past. It is now nearly one minute to 12. Under no circumstances must the number of possessors increase. The Non-Proliferation Treaty makes no provision for sanctions, however. For its application it needs a patron. That role must be assumed by the Security Council, which has the authority to impose sanctions and the instruments to enforce them.

States which, contrary to international law, try to acquire the capability of producing nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction should be the target of the most stringent possible sanctions. Only the complete isolation of such States can deter them from activities threatening world peace and the existence of the human race. The Security Council should see this as one of the focal points of its future work.

Germany acted resolutely and responsibly in the achievement and implementation of Security Council resolution 687, which opened a new perspective for an enhanced role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and arms control.

Mr. President, the central task of the Conference on Disarmament this year is the conclusion of a convention on a global, reliably verifiable ban on chemical weapons. The CD States have set themselves the goal of completing this task at the current session.

(Mr. Genscher, Germany)

Your appointment of Ambassador von Wagner to the chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons during this decisive year is an expression of your confidence in Germany's commitment to these negotiations, and I thank you for it. Germany takes this responsibility very seriously and we will do all in our power to bring the negotiations to a punctual and successful conclusion.

Chemical weapons are a man-made scourge of humanity. As I have repeatedly said at this Conference, they are not weapons at all but means of exterminating people.

The ban on the use of chemical weapons has been disregarded time and again and has proved inadequate. Even unilateral measures, however urgent these might be, can only temporarily stem the tide of proliferation. Only the clear-cut prohibition of any association with chemical weapons, hence including production, acquisition and possession, can finally free us of this scourge of humanity.

The convention prohibiting chemical weapons can only do this if two preconditions are met: first, accession to it by the vast majority of the international community, and, secondly, confidence in the effective verification of the prohibitions agreed on.

The first precondition for a successful convention is accession by as extensive a membership as possible. For that, the advantages of the Convention must be judged as outweighing its cost. For some States which do not see their neighbours as a threat, the gain in security may seem small. But no one should forget how deadly the combination of missile technology and mass-destruction weapons can be. No State is immune to that threat.

Now let me say something about the second aspect, verification. Only verifiability of the obligations assumed creates confidence, and only confidence creates security.

The negotiations on the verification system of a chemical weapons convention are far advanced, and everything points to possible consensus. The reliably verifiable proscription by the international community of a whole category of weapons of mass destruction will be a pioneering achievement.

Controls of the chemical industry are indispensable for a chemical weapons convention. The task of the convention is to deter, by means inclusive of verification measures, any attempt to misuse the civilian chemical industry for the production of chemical weapons. Naturally, such verification measures, being so new, cannot function perfectly from the outset. The task of the future Chemical Weapons Organization and its technical secretariat will be to gradually develop verification procedures that work to the satisfaction of all member States.

The international community must make it part of its code of conduct to accord a State that accedes to this convention greater confidence and willingness to cooperate than a State that does not.

(Mr. Genscher, Germany)

Confidence will also be generated by the destruction of the existing arsenals of chemical weapons, which have long been a burden even to their owners.

I welcome President Yeltsin's statement that Russia has taken over responsibility for the destruction of all of the formerly Soviet stockpiles of chemical weapons. Special importance attaches to the timely destruction of those stockpiles. Russia needs help in dealing with problems arising in connection with the storage, security and destruction of those weapons. Germany is ready to help but others must also do so.

The banning of weapons of mass destruction must also include biological weapons. We welcome the results of the Third Review Conference, in September 1991, of the Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention. It is a further contribution to the development of the system of confidence-building measures. That convention should be equipped with a verification system.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union has given a new dimension to the already existing peril of the spread of know-how concerning the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction. On this I submitted proposals to Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali. Those ideas were taken up and reaffirmed in the Final Declaration of the Security Council Summit of 31 January. Along with United States Secretary of State Baker and Russian Foreign Minister Kosyrev, I called for the establishment of an international science and technology centre in Russia. Scientists previously employed in research and development on weapons of mass destruction are to be given civilian jobs in their own country. The idea is to minimize any temptation to engage in activities that would lead to the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, as well as of delivery technologies. Through projects in their own country these scientists and engineers are to participate in the reduction and elimination of weapons of mass destruction and to contribute to greater safety in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. This initiative is in many respects an important contribution to conversion. To be successful, the initiative will require considerable international support. It already has the backing of the European Community.

The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe creates an indispensable basis for a new cooperative security system in Europe, a basis for further deep cuts in excessive weaponry and for overcoming the old thinking in terms of a power struggle. Germany will make every effort to ensure that that Treaty enters into force and is implemented by all its States parties and their successors as soon as possible.

It is also necessary for the ongoing CFE 1 a negotiations to supplement, with an agreement that limits personnel levels, the CFE Treaty, which establishes ceilings only for the principal conventional weapons systems. Germany has set a good example with its 1990 commitment to limit our forces to 370,000 men. We expect the other negotiating parties to follow that example.

(Mr. Genscher, Germany)

We also expect the forthcoming CSCE follow-up meeting at Helsinki to chart the main points on the road to a new cooperative security system covering the vast area from Vancouver to Vladivostok. The ending of the Cold War and the new common order of values for human rights, democracy and the rule of law, established in the Charter of Paris, offer an historic opportunity for this.

This urgently requires additional radical disarmament and arms control measures, but also a broad-based open dialogue on all aspects of security, and lastly the strengthening of stability in Europe through effective conflict prevention and crisis management. Here, Mr. President, you have rightly pointed out the close connections between disarmament, conflict prevention and crisis management. Success here is in the interests of the CSCE States and in the interests of the whole world. The Helsinki meeting is also to see the signing of an "Open Skies" agreement which will make military transparency and thus confidence building throughout the CSCE area a reality for the first time. Willingness to accept comprehensive transparency, inspection and verification must be a major element of cooperative security and confidence building.

An example of this in the field of chemical weapons are challenge inspections throughout the territory of the contracting States. They are an extreme means of checking compliance with the chemical weapons convention. Outside Europe, the opening of sensitive facilities to such inspections is still largely unknown, but our experience in this area has been good. I can tell you, Mr. President, that today Germany is probably the most inspected country in the world, and this has in no way impaired our security. On the contrary, it has won us more confidence.

It is the attitude to transparency, the willingness to accept inspection and verification that is the touchstone which separates two approaches, which separates old thinking from new thinking. To wish to keep everything secret is old thinking. Complete openness is a manifestion of new thinking. Those who have nothing to hide need not fear openness. They can rather prove the good intentions that stand behind their words. Thus, this new openness becomes an essential element of confidence building. As we know, distrust is one of the causes of tensions, and tensions are the causes of the arms races that follow.

Mr. President, today no State, no region in the world, can shirk its active responsibility for international security any longer. I welcome the fact that the United Nations General Assembly has decided on a register for conventional weapons. It is a measure I have been advocating in the United Nations for almost 12 years. The CSCE States have undertaken to provide comprehensive information for the register. We expect all the other United Nations Member States that endorsed the General Assembly's decision to likewise publish their data on exports and imports of conventional weapons in the register. In addition, further relevant information should follow, with a view to developing a comprehensive system of transparency in military matters, as a globally applicable United Nations confidence-building measure. The Geneva Conference on Disarmament can assume a significant role in the necessary preparations.

(Mr. Genscher, Germany)

The next step must be effective measures to limit and monitor exports of arms. Now that, with the ending of the Cold War, Europe has prepared the way for stopping the export of that political dynamite to the Third World, it must henceforth refrain from exporting its now superfluous arms to the Third World. It is intolerable for the North to stuff the South of this Earth with weapons it no longer needs. Disarmament must therefore be supplemented by conversion. The conversion of military production facilities into facilities for producing peaceful goods must be made a priority for international-stability policy. For that, we need a conversion of technological know-how as well as a conversion of arms factories.

Mr. President, if the mandate of the United Nations General Assembly that a chemical weapons convention be submitted at this year's session is to be implemented, consensus must be reached by the beginning of August. The progress already made and the spirit in which you are supporting the German chairman make me confident that this goal can be reached.

Thereafter, when this year's United Nations General Assembly has endorsed our common product, a signature conference should be convened as soon as possible. I call upon all States that have not already done so to declare their willingness to become original signatories of the convention. To obtain the signatures of as many States as possible under this historic document from the outset, all members of the international community, whether members of the Conference on Disarmament or not, should participate in such a signature conference. I welcome President Mitterrand's offer to hold such a conference in Paris before the end of the year.

For the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, the chemical weapons convention will be the first treaty to be successfully concluded since the Biological Weapons Convention of 1972. In that sense, the success of the CW Convention will also guarantee continued confidence in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament and in the fulfilment of its future tasks. Germany will do all within its power to contribute to a successful outcome. Of that, Mr. President, I can expressly assure you and the States assembled here.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank His Excellency, the Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, for his important statement and for the kind words he addressed to me.

I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Argentina, Ambassador García Moritán, who will speak on behalf of the delegations of Argentina and Brazil.

Mr. GARCIA MORITAN (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, I should like to express my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you in the Chair, presiding over the sole forum for multilateral negotiations on disarmament, and to stress again as regards efforts to strengthen international security - the very special relationship which links our two countries in the framework of the South Atlantic zone of peace and cooperation. Our personal friendship and the professional respect I have for you accentuate the confidence of my delegation in your presidency. You can count on the cooperation of the Argentine delegation in this new responsibility.

(Mr. García Moritán, Argentina)

I should also like to avail myself of the opportunity to express our thanks to our colleague and friend, the Ambassador of Yugoslavia, for the work he did for the Conference on Disarmament during the first month of the current session. To him and his efficient delegation we extend our gratitude.

It is my privilege to be the first speaker after the Conference on Disarmament listened to the statement of the Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, in the Salle du Conseil this morning on the occasion of his delegation's chairmanship of the final phase of our negotiations on chemical weapons. It is a further clear testimony of the unique responsibility that the Conference on Disarmament is exercising today and of the urgency and importance of its tasks.

It gives me particular satisfaction to be taking the floor this morning on behalf of the delegations of Brazil and Argentina, thus continuing to present our coordination in matters of disarmament and security policy, whose latest contribution was reported to this body by my friend the Ambassador of Brazil, Mr. Celso Amorim, when he introduced a few weeks ago our bilateral agreements on the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

On the same question I should like to add on behalf of Ambassador Amorim and myself that, on instructions from Brasilia and Buenos Aires, we shall be submitting as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament the recent message sent by the Presidents of our two countries to OPENAL (Organization for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America) on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

In that joint statement, the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the President of the Argentine Republic refer inter alia to the fact that they are in the process of "taking effective measures for the implementation of the third and last commitment of the Declaration of Foz do Igaçú" and they go on to indicate that "at the earliest possible opportunity we shall submit for the consideration of OPENAL some amendments to the text of the Treaty of Tlatelolco of a primarily technical nature not affecting its principles and purposes in any way".

Mr. President, besides announcing the submission of that important document, today Brazil and Argentina would like to express some general considerations on a category of weapons of mass destruction of particular significance and responsibility for all of us in this Conference on Disarmament: chemical weapons.

Time flies and we are faced with the fact that we are now well into the first quarter of 1992. This is the year within which we have committed ourselves before the international community to conclude our negotiations. That commitment, which is a prominent feature of the mandate we have given the Ad Hoc Committee, has caught the attention of the international community, which is carefully watching us.

(Mr. García Moritán, Argentina)

A few weeks ago, as a tangible reflection of the rapid and promising changes that have occurred in international politics in so short a time, the 15 Heads of State or Government of the member countries of the Security Council gathered in New York for a summit meeting, the first since the signing of the San Francisco Charter almost half a century ago.

On that occasion, the permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council issued a joint statement which has the merit of being a coherent and consensual review of some of the most urgent problems on the international agenda, among them the problem of chemical weapons. The then President of the Security Council, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, read out the joint statement on behalf of the members of the body that, according to the Charter, "bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security". The statement expressed support for our negotiating efforts to conclude, by the end of 1992, a universal convention - including a verification regime - to definitively prohibit chemical weapons.

The hackneyed phrase to the effect that we can no longer behave as if the situation were one of business as usual seems finally to have acquired real meaning.

Time is short, but I believe that we have all the necessary elements to finish the convention now. To begin with, we consider the Ad Hoc Committee chairmanship of Ambassador von Wagner in itself an element that must be recorded as important for achieving so difficult objective in so brief a time. Allow me, Mr. President, through you to address our colleague Ambassador von Wagner, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, in order to reiterate to him the commitment and unlimited cooperation of the delegations of Brazil and Argentina in taking the final step in our negotiations. Our task, Ambassador von Wagner, cannot be more demanding and its urgency has been recognized by all. However, in saying that the task is urgent, we do not wish to imply that it must be completed hastily. Nevertheless, while fully conscious of the heavy responsibility borne by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, we are also aware that after almost a decade of negotiations all of the elements are on the table and the time has come for the final political decision.

In our view, it is time to assemble the factors of the final equation, to put them in logical order and to submit them to the plenipotentiaries for definitive consideration. The idea, with respect to certain questions, of "leaving them to ripen" - a euphemism which has served to circumvent the absence of political will in the past - will no longer do.

Universal participation is a principle dear to the political and diplomatic tradition of Argentina and Brazil, and consequently we fully support it in this area while recognizing the logical limitations sometimes imposed by political reality. In this regard, we shall continue our endeavours to win more support, every day, every minute, in an effort of diplomatic education to make obvious to all what is already a conviction to most of us here, i.e. that accession to this convention will be good not only for the international community but also, and above all, for everyone in our States individually.

(Mr. García Moritán, Argentina)

In any case, in our subcontinent, South America, the States - through pronouncements like the Mendoza Agreement, the official text of which is now before the distinguished delegations, which comprises Brazil, Argentina and Chile and to which the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, Paraguay and Bolivia will accede, as well as the Declaration of Cartagena of the Indies, uniting the efforts of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Venezuela - have sent a strong and unanimous political signal of support for the convention through the commitment of our countries to be original signatories of the convention.

To the above must be added the public expressions of many other countries in other continents and regions along similar lines, all of which allows us to conclude that we have already reached the critical mass necessary to launch the first multilateral convention prohibiting completely and without discrimination an entire category of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. President, as we proceed to this final phase of the negotiations, allow me to share with you briefly some ideas which Brazil and Argentina consider relevant and which are currently being dealt with in the Ad Hoc Committee.

First, as regards the verification regime. In our opinion, it would be advisable to deal with realistic assumptions. The scheme of inspections will necessarily have to adjust to the realities of a budget which will inevitably be limited. Consequently, we must ask ourselves whether it would be sensible to aim at a scheme requiring a very large number of inspections if that target cannot be met. We would be running the risk of unleashing a gigantic system which would not provide the degree of security proportional to the resources that would be at its disposal.

The system of routine inspections should, in our judgement, be guided by clear cost-effective criteria. At the same time, as is the case in other, similar situations, the inspections would have to be made primarily by the Organization, including such aspects as the designation of relevant facilities and the execution of the inspections themselves.

As regards such questions as national designations in connection with inspections of the chemical industry, the principle could be reflected in the convention in such a way as not to weaken the powers and the role of the Technical Secretariat vis-á-vis the views of the States parties, which could be taken into consideration as suggestions. On that understanding and with those limitations it should not prove very difficult even now to arrive at compromise formulas.

As to another aspect of challenge inspections, Brazil and Argentina would perhaps have preferred to see a model of challenge inspections closer to the original version (anytime, anywhere and without right of refusal) than the one we are finally considering.

The approach suggested in the proposal of the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan and Australia departs considerably from that scheme, probably owing to the new reading its authors have given to the post-cold war

(Mr. García Moritán, Argentina)

global strategic scenario. We believe that if, as negotiators, we have to accept this new scheme for the sake of consensus, it would be useful to strengthen those special aspects which, if not adequately addressed, might weaken the system to the point of irrelevance.

We are referring specifically to questions like securing the inspection site, minimum intervals once inspection is requested, and other elements connected with managed access. There has also been discussion about the question of observers, an integral part of the United States proposal, and about whether it belongs in a convention of this kind. We believe that it should prove possible to agree on a mechanism allowing the presence of observers in consultations with the requested State. Nevertheless, it must be spelled out clearly that it is the team of international inspectors of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons that carries out the inspection in all its aspects. To call into question their impartiality and their technical expertise through the presence of onlookers would create a dangerous precedent which could have repercussions even for the normal functioning of other mechanisms of internationally applied safeguards, such as the case of nuclear safeguards.

The third aspect we should like to deal with this morning is the role of the Executive Council in challenge inspections.

Closely connected with the system of challenge inspections is the question of assigning a role to the Executive Council in the process, both at its beginning - to determine the appropriateness of the request - and at the end of the inspection - to indicate whether or not there has been a violation. The question is extremely complex and the development of the negotiations will no doubt alter or nuance the nature of the controversy.

Be that as it may, we deem it important to keep a basic premise. The Executive Council is a political organ, albeit tinged in this case with major technical elements. That being so, it would be extremely dangerous to try to transform it into a judicial body, able to grant or not to grant a request that might have been submitted for inspection, or to pronounce final judgement concerning the situation that gave rise to the inspection. The Executive Council of the Organization will issue neither good-conduct certificates nor guilty verdicts. That is not its function and it would be unrealistic to claim that it is.

It would be possible, on the other hand, to accept the inclusion of a minimum of provisions whereby the Executive Council could have a rapid preliminary supporting opinion from the Technical Secretariat concerning the request for inspection. That organ should limit itself to confirming the existence of sufficient elements to justify launching the complicated and costly process of a challenge inspection, without entering into a value judgement on those elements, something that would seem a priori unrealistic coming from an office situated far from the place concerned. Otherwise, the Council would become a scene of polemics inconducive to the ultimate purpose of the Convention.

(Mr. García Moritán, Argentina)

As to granting the Council the power to pronounce on the final results of the inspection, we believe that the caution called for in the previous case is even more necessary here. It should be borne in mind at all times that a challenge inspection might well produce ambiguous results or lend itself to different readings. It could even happen that the results of an inspection may be considered valid at a certain time but not necessarily applicable to future situations. As we see, the range of possibilities is too great to be thinking about endowing the Council with the power to pass final judgement on circumstances which may well be ambiguous or not very clear. But all of the above is without prejudice, of course, to the full exercise by the Council of the important political powers set out in the text of the convention.

Mr. President, one of the aspects on which Brazil and Argentina have laid particular emphasis is the subject of economic and technological development and international cooperation, and in that context the matter of controls or limitations on international trade in chemicals and related equipment.

Our insistence simply reflects a concern which Argentina and Brazil have expressed and will continue to express in all fora and bodies that deal with questions relating to security. It is based simply on the idea that States which have given the international community satisfactory guarantees regarding their commitments with respect to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction should not encounter limitations on their legitimate aspirations to develop and accede to dual-use technologies for the development and welfare of their peoples.

With reference to this topic I would like to draw attention to the ideas expressed some days ago in this room by Ambassador Errera of France when he indicated his readiness and that of his Government to seek, by way of open dialogue, a solution to the complex problem of the technology-cooperation-security triad. In our convention, these questions fall within the scope of article XI.

We are hopeful that the efforts of the friend of the Chairman responsible for this important question, Counsellor José Eduardo Felicio of Brazil - whom I would like, as head of the Argentine delegation, to assure of our complete support and confidence - will be matched by the necessary search for compromise on the part of all delegations, in particular those which, in the absence of a multilateral convention, have so far chosen the path of restrictions channelled through informal groups.

Linked to that problem is the problem of cooperation and trade relations between parties to the convention and States which opt to remain outside of it. We believe that with a little imagination it would be possible to design a gradual scheme that would avoid extremes and allow for trade under clearly defined conditions and requirements similar to those in the nuclear field where the existence of models of safeguards agreements on a case-by-case basis has produced an adapted and flexible response that perhaps could be followed in the chemical convention.

(Mr. García Moritán, Argentina)

I deem it important to stress that what we have in mind is not a scheme that would threaten the universality of the convention or indirectly discourage the decision of States to accede to it but, on the contrary, a strict regime of a temporary nature that would cater for the concrete situations that are bound to arise in the first years after the entry into force of the convention.

One of the effects of having negotiated this convention for so long is that, like a historical saga, it has been incorporating elements coming from earlier negotiating traditions and conditions.

That would be an interesting tale if our task were to recount the history of our negotiations, but it sometimes becomes an unnecessary obstacle when our object is to complete the treaty once and for all. Much has been achieved in 1991 in attuning our convention to the signs of the times we are living. The finishing touches are still to be made, however, and in them perhaps a little boldness may not be superfluous.

We are counting on the boldness of all the delegations here and of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, and we, for our part, promise that of Brazil and Argentina in order to attain the lofty objective we have set ourselves, which is to complete, in the next few weeks, a convention definitively banning chemical weapons.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Argentina for his statement on behalf of the delegations of his country and Brazil, and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Australia, Ambassador O'Sullivan.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (Australia): Mr. President, may I commence by congratulating you on the assumption of the leadership of our Conference and assure you of the full support of my delegation? May I also take the occasion to thank Ambassador Calovski and the hard-working delegation of Yugoslavia who helped us through the difficult early weeks of this year?

Mr. President, I should like to commence by applauding the statement that we have heard this morning from the Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, in particular, his injunctions to us to conclude a Chemical Weapons Convention this year. I also wish to say that I fully share the sentiments that have just been expressed by Ambassador García Moritán of Argentina. In particular, I strongly support his view that we need a new sense of urgency, a new approach to our work, some audacity, some boldness and we need to take final political decisions here.

Mr. President, in June 1988, the Australian Prime Minister announced that Australia was in the process of initiating a Regional Initiative on Chemical Weapons Issues in South-East Asia and the South Pacific, with the objective of developing a greater regional understanding of the future Chemical Weapons Convention and its requirements for national implementation.

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

As we have previously stated in this forum, as part of this Regional Initiative, Australia has hosted two seminars, one in Canberra in August 1989 and one in Brisbane in November 1990.

I spoke to this Conference on 14 February 1991 and said that Australia intended to host a workshop for regional chemists later in 1991, with the aim of providing the necessary background to those technical advisers in governments in the region who may be required to assist in the national implementation of the future Convention.

It is my pleasure to report that this workshop was held, as planned, last August, at the Materials Research Laboratory with 19 participants from 16 countries in our region. In addition to the presentations and discussions on the scientific and technical aspects of the CWC, the participants observed the conduct of a Trial Inspection of a chemical plant site that may be defined as either Schedule 3 or "CW-Capable" under the future Convention. A Trial Inspection report is being issued by the Secretariat as document CD/1128, and will appear as Working Paper CD/CW/WP.385. I hope that this Working Paper will assist in the future work of this Conference and the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, in particular, the Working Group on Verification.

Mr. President, while discussing the subject of implementation of the future Convention, a number of delegates at this morning's meeting may recall that at the Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons, held in Canberra in September 1989, the Australian Foreign Minister announced that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade was proceeding to establish a National Secretariat to act as a nucleus for the future Natonal Authority of the CWC. The Minister stated that that secretariat, in consultation with appropriate Federal and State Government departments, would be responsible for reviewing existing laws and regulations covering the activities of the Australian chemical industry, and looking for ways to introduce and adapt the prospective requirements of the CWC to our current regulatory matrix.

The first task of the National Secretariat was to develop a strategy to prepare Australia for national implementation of the Convention. The strategy comprises a programme of consultation and research leading to the development of a package of implementation measures which will be considered by the Australian Government at the appropriate time. A document entitled "Strategy for Preparing for the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in Australia" was presented to the Conference on Disarmament in February 1991 as document CD/1055. That paper served to illustrate the fact that there is a wide range of tasks which should be initiated in good time by all governments to allow arrangements to be put in place for a smooth transfer from signature of the Convention to its ratification.

An important requirement under the future Convention, highlighted in the Strategy Paper, is the assembling of data on which chemicals are produced, used, and traded. When considering its approach to implementation, Australia's National Secretariat was faced with the problem of not knowing the levels of production or use of the relevant chemicals in Australia. This is a

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

fundamental question which is critical for any country in determining not only the size and shape of its National Authority, but also the overall national implementation effort which will be required.

With this in mind, the National Secretariat has recently commenced a survey to collect the information about the production, processing and consumption of chemicals that would be required from Australia by the Organization when the Convention comes into effect.

The survey questionnaire was developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, with the technical assistance of the Materials Research Laboratory, chemical industry organizations, and a number of chemical companies. The survey was conducted in December 1991.

Mr. President, it is my pleasure to report that document CD/1129 (Working Paper CD/CW/WP.386) which is being issued by the Secretariat, discusses the overall objectives and the approach taken in the conduct of the survey. In addition, a copy of the survey questionnaire is included as an annex to the working paper. It is our hope that this working paper, and in particular the survey methodology and questionnaire, will assist other countries in undertaking similar exercises in preparation for the implementation of the CWC.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Australia for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me.

I have no other speakers on my list for today. Is there any other member of the Conference who wishes to speak at this stage? There is none.

We will now consider a request from Panama to participate in our work. The Secretariat has circulated the relevant draft decision in document CD/WP.424, which contains a note by the President. As no objection was raised when the communication from Panama was circulated, I suggest that we should now adopt the draft decision directly in plenary. May I take it that the Conference adopts document CD/WP.424?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I am pleased to inform you that the informal consultations regarding the chairmen of the subsidiary bodies have been successfully concluded. Before turning to nominations for the chairmen of the Ad Hoc Committees under agenda items 5, 6 and 7, I should like, as President of the Conference, to point out that the decisions which we are about to take will apply only to this annual session and will not constitute a precedent for the future work of the Conference.

I now propose to the Conference the nomination of Ambassador Romulus Neagu of Romania as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. May I take it that the Conference adopts this proposal?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ambassador Nasseri.

Mr. NASSERI (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, may I congratulate you first and express our fullest satisfaction in seeing you in the position of leading our Conference? Knowing your experience and background, I am sure they will contribute to the best way of handling our work and let me assure you of my delegation's fullest cooperation.

I should like to make the following statement on behalf of the Group of 21 in connection with the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.

On 6 December 1991, the United Nations General Assembly by an overwhelming majority and only one dissenting vote adopted resolution 46/33 on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. The resolution reaffirmed cardinal principles that we would like to reiterate this morning, such as the common interest of mankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and the need to take further measures, including the negotiation of appropriate international agreements, in order to prevent an arms race in outer space.

In this respect, the primary reponsibility of the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating body has been once again emphasized.

The resolution further requests the Conference on Disarmament to intensify its consideration of the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, building upon areas of convergence and taking into account relevant proposals and initiatives. In this regard, special mention was made to relevant proposals and initiatives, including those presented in the Ad Hoc Committee at the 1991 session.

The Group of 21 believes that the work of the Ad Hoc Committee in 1991 made important progress towards a more systematic consideration of the issues covered by its mandate and programme of work. The preliminary work done by the friends of the Chairman on salient aspects of the space and security agenda was unanimously recognized by the Committee, which recommended that the exercise be continued in 1992. We thus consider that there exists a sound basis for the continuation of the efforts which, based upon previous work carried out by the Committee since 1985, acquired in 1991 a more focused character.

To achieve this, the Group of 21 remains convinced that a negotiating mandate would be necessary, as it would help in concentrating our efforts on concrete proposals aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space. To the regret of the Group, however, this has not been possible due to the reluctance of some delegations to accept such a change.

(Mr. Nasseri, Islamic Republic of Iran)

In order to facilitate the speedy resumption of work, the Group of 21 has decided to go along with the same mandate as before. This is a renewed demonstration of the flexibility and goodwill of the Group. It is our hope that other delegations will respond constructively to this attitude and agree to a more focused approach to relevant issues so that we can move forward in areas where there are prospects for agreement.

Given the urgency the Group of 21 attaches to this item, it is of the view that substantive work should start immediately in order to achieve progress and attain positive results. We continue to expect substantial movement on the issue of the mandate in the near future.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his statement and for his kind words to me.

I now turn to nominations for the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons, and propose Ambassador Nasseri, of the Islamic Republic of Iran, for that office. May I take it that the Conference adopts this proposal?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I should now like to turn to nominations for Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons. I propose Ambassador Serguei Batsanov, of the Russian Federation. May I take it that the Conference so decides?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I should like to extend to the chairmen of the subsidiary bodies whom we have just elected our congratulations and best wishes for success in discharging their important responsibilities.

I am told that the representative of Chile has asked for the floor.

Mr. GONZALEZ (Chile) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, my delegation would first like to associate itself, in particular, with the congratulations extended to you and assure you of its support in the work of the Conference on Disarmament, to which my country attaches the greatest importance.

We did not intend to take the floor at this plenary meeting. However, Mr. President, we are prompted to do so by the important statement made by the Ambassador of Iran on behalf of the Group of 21, in order to reiterate our well-known position on the question of the military uses of outer space and on the consequent need for the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space to play a negotiating role. In this regard, we should like to recall and emphasize the excellent work done in the past year by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador García Moritán of Argentina, which enabled

(Mr. Gonzalez, Chile)

us to move forward in a minimum process of identification in order to establish a frame of reference for the adoption of more specific legislation on a matter of particular concern to us.

However, we should also like to recall, Mr. President, that many years ago in the United Nations General Assembly, we, in conjunction with the delegation of Mexico among others, pressed for the inclusion of an item on the militarization of outer space, a proposal which was adopted by a large majority in the General Assembly and which also gave a form of mandate to the Committee on Outer Space to reach a decision on this question. That was in 1983, Mr. President. Almost 10 years have passed and we have consistently been told that the Committee on Outer Space, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, has no capacity, mandate or opportunity to decide on this question, inter alia, because it is for the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, which is a body of the Conference on Disarmament, to do so. However, we wish simply to note and draw attention to the paradoxical fact that that Committee has thus far not been given a negotiating mandate either.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): With regard to the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, the special coordinator, Ambassador Shah of India, has actively continued his consultations and I hope that we shall have some good news soon. The other matter that we must consider was taken up by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/36 L, entitled "Transparency in armaments". I propose to continue the consultations begun by my predecessor on the proposals presented in order to better respond to the General Assembly's request. We shall hold an informal consultation, open to all members of the Conference, at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 25 February, in this conference room, with interpretation services.

As you know, in the Thursday plenaries, we normally adopt the timetable for the following week's meetings. However, as we have just taken decisions regarding the chairmen of the Ad Hoc Committees, I thought it preferable not to have the timetable circulated before consulting the newly-elected chairmen regarding the needs of their subsidiary bodies. When we have agreed on a programme of work, I shall ask the Secretariat to circulate the weekly timetable.

As we have completed today's agenda, I shall now adjourn this plenary meeting.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will take place on Thursday, 27 February, at 10 a.m. sharp. The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.